



Graduate Studies

Newsletter

Dean's Message

As Interim Dean of Graduate Studies and on behalf of the staff I want to express our sincere thanks to all our institutional partners across campus and to reiterate that we look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to make 2021 a great year!

I also wanted to take this opportunity to let you know that we have been working hard internally as a department to prioritize some of the most pressing issues as identified in our recent weekly SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis meetings. We hope to be able to implement several changes and enhancements to our current business processes in order to

better serve you and our graduate students over the next few months. One of the first things we identified as a weakness/threat was the need to improve our communication with our institutional partners. As such we have decided to publish and distribute a quarterly digital newsletter to help keep graduate departments/programs abreast of any relevant updates, best practices, concerns, and challenges relating to graduate education, both on and off campus.

We hope that you will take a brief moment to review the information shared in this quarterly publication and that this information will be both informative and helpful to you. We also welcome and encourage any feedback or suggestions you may have to help us better serve you and your students.

Best wishes to you all for this New Year!

Logan Gillette
Interim Dean



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Graduate Studies Enhancements Currently Implemented or Being Implemented:

1. Monthly graduate student Q & A forum with the Dean of Graduate Studies
2. The selection and implementation of a new online graduate application and CRM to replace previous solutions
3. Recalibration of the High Impact Doctoral Research Award (HIDRA) into High Impact Graduate Research Award (HIGRA) in collaboration with Graduate Council to provide the award to both Master's and Doctoral students; Incorporation of the Graduate Council members to select award recipients to provide greater transparency regarding this funding model
4. Newly admitted student deferment process for COVID complications
5. Student Leave of Absence for COVID complications for current matriculated graduate students
6. Distribution of university allocations to graduate departments/programs at or greater than the 2020 allocations
7. Redesigned and standardized theses and dissertation review process for external reviewers to increase the number of theses reviews associated with Academic Unit Reviews in collaboration with Assessment and Planning
8. Redesigned and streamlined Graduate Faculty Status approval workflow with quicker decision times
9. Digital workflow and routing processes to replace previous Graduate Studies PDF Petitions and associated forms which we anticipate will dramatically improve response times in order to better serve our graduate applicant and student populations
10. Enhanced graduate student professional development opportunities including monthly professional series presentations
11. Revised Graduate Studies Annual Report of Graduate Programs in Tableau with ability for graduate departments/programs to manipulate and generate queries within said reports



3 Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition

The University Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition will take place on March 11, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. More information here:

<https://gradstudies.byu.edu/page/3mt%E2%80%94three-minute-thesis>



Pro-tips



PDF Delivery Rules

1. Application is submitted
2. All letters of rec are submitted (or waived)
3. 3 days have passed since the export date
4. The batch job runs at 3pm MST (5pm EST where our vendor resides) so check for submission times of letters of rec prior to thinking something is wrong with PDF delivery

If a graduate program manager is instructed to waive a few letters of rec in order to have the PDFs appear in GS12, please email our office to see if this privilege has been added in ApplyYourself. Instructions will be sent and new access will be granted.

Reminder of Tasks Due for Faculty (Grad Progress)

A new feature has been added for faculty to know when they have tasks to complete in Grad Progress. Faculty should go to the Grad Progress page (gradprog is the shortcut URL in AIM) and look their list of students. A large red asterisk * appears by any student whose progress is awaiting action by this faculty. Faculty should navigate to the next milestone that does not have a green check mark to view what they need to do. Faculty always receive an email when they need to approve etc., but we realize it may not be convenient to follow up the moment the email arrives.

New Professional Development Series

The Graduate Student Society presidency has created a virtual Professional Development Seminar series which allows students to interact with professionals from a variety of different fields and backgrounds. All Graduate Coordinators and Graduate Program Managers are invited to participate in the live event, or the seminars can be viewed at any time here: [Professional Development Seminars.](#)

As part of this professional development series, the annual Faith in Scholarship Symposium will be held on January 28 at 7pm. Ryan Rowberry, Associate Professor of Law at Georgia State University and Joseph Brickey, an award-winning LDS artist, will discuss how they've maintained their faith in their scholarly endeavors. Join us by clicking [here](#) on January 28.



RESOURCES

Information Resource



Have you seen our Information Resource page found at

<https://www.byu.edu/gradstudiesinfo/>

This comprehensive resource has a wealth of information about all things graduate studies related.

Features include:

- Graduate Studies Annual Update
- Graduate Studies Policy Handbook
- *Graduate Studies Personnel Resource Packet* (esp. helpful for Grad Program Managers & Coordinators)
- NEW Graduate Program Proposal Guide
- Handbook for Advising and Mentoring Graduate Students
- Principles and Characteristics of Graduate Education
- Graduate Studies Administrator Responsibilities
- Graduate Council Members
- Graduate Studies Calendar
- Recruitment Schedule
- 12 Things New Graduate Students Should Know
- Graduate Students Orientation Guide

We invite you to take a look or revisit this page if it's been a while!



Graduate Studies Enhancements Being Considered:

1. Mental health early intervention and notification system in collaboration with the University Accessibility Center (UAC) that informs relevant graduate student committee members of any legally required accommodations
2. Enhanced website interface in Brightspot (currently in progress)
3. Revised graduate student residency requirements policy
4. Needs-based scholarships/awards sponsored by Graduate Studies
5. Enhanced oversight regarding the development of online graduate courses offered through BYU Continuing Education
6. Revised graduate student exit surveys designed to solicit data responses that programs/departments can better utilize
7. Research ways to enhance the student evaluation process in AIM and find ways to capture and track more faculty input in an online environment

Feature Highlights

IMPORTANCE OF SCHEDULING DEFENSES IN GRAD PROGRESS EVEN WHEN USING ZOOM

Zoom defenses became necessary when BYU shut down in March and faculty and students have adapted to this new method. There is one important issue we want to bring to your attention. The defense date and time needs to be scheduled in Grad Progress BEFORE the defense date. Failure to officially schedule defenses in Grad Progress will prevent committee members from

being able to enter approvals or qualifications in the new system which will cause unnecessary delays for their students who need to proceed to submit their ETD. As long as Zoom defenses are still being scheduled, please be sure to also include sending a notice to your program manager of the date and time so it can be added to Grad Progress at least one day before the defense.



GRADUATE PROGRESS REPORT

Please remind your students that they should review their progress report at the beginning of each semester to make sure they are progressing toward graduation.



PROQUEST HARVESTING ETDs INCLUDING MASTER'S WORKS

Graduate Studies signed an agreement to allow ProQuest to harvest ETDs from the BYU digital repository. This means the requirement for additional submission to ProQuest went away for Doctoral students, and Master's ETDs will now be discoverable in ProQuest. The oldest master's thesis in the Proquest system goes back to 2003. ProQuest has harvested 5870 titles to date and processed about half of that content. Both Master's and Doctoral titles have been released and are available in PQDT. 356 Doctoral titles and 2133 Masters titles were released as of November 2020. The remaining titles left to process are Master's. ProQuest's goal is to stay up to date on any title with a degree date of 2021. For the backfile Master's content, ProQuest has a goal of being 100% complete no later than the first quarter of 2021.

NEW ONLINE GRADUATE APPLICATION UNDER DESIGN

After much deliberation, Graduate Studies, in collaboration with the CRM Taskforce, comprised of several Graduate Program Manager representatives from each of the respective colleges, has selected a NEW vendor (Technolutions) and application platform (SLATE) to replace our previous solution (Applyyourself).

Graduate Studies will continue to collaborate with graduate departments and programs to implement and develop a new application during January to April. We invite departments to be thinking of features or functions you would like incorporated in the NEW graduate application and we will work to implement your suggestions.



GOOD NEWS FOR ETD ACCESS

The BYU Library Scholar's Archive reports that last month theses and dissertations had 66,247 full-text downloads. Our graduate student works are being read and accessed! If you want to do a more advanced search by discipline or other months, please visit the Dashboard. You can see the number of downloads happening from all over the world.

GRADUATE COMMITTEES AND SPECIAL MEMBERS

When a student/department petitions for a BYU employee without graduate faculty status to serve as a committee member, that person will be added as a "special member" if approved. Special members do not count towards the number of required committee members (three for master's and four for doctoral), but are always in addition to the required number of committee members.



Formatting ETDs

Gradprogress has a great resource to help students format their ETD title pages and preliminary pages:
[AIM>gradprog>Resources>Formatting](#)

REMIND STUDENTS TO REVIEW ETD COMMENTS

Some students are not reviewing the ETD comments made by Graduate Studies, Departments or Colleges, and it is delaying graduation for some students. Please remind your students that they should be reading the comments in Grad Progress as soon as they are notified (by email) that a comment has been made.

Calendar



UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 18 No Classes
- January 19 Winter Tuition final deadline
- January 21 Minimum Registration Report to departments
- January 21 Time Limit report to departments
- January 28 GSS Faith in Scholarship (7:00p)
- January 29 Last day to apply for graduation
- February 12 Last day departments can enter graduation applications
- February 17 GSS Faith in Scholarship Symposium
- February 17 Report of Spring Applications Marked Late to departments
- March 5 Problem Report to departments
- March 11 GSS 3MT Competition
- March 26 Last day to schedule oral exams
- March 31 Discontinuance deadline
- April 1 HIGRA Application Deadline
- April 2 Problem Report to departments
- April 6 GSS Grad Expo
- April 9 Last day to convene final oral exams
- April 9 Last day to submit theses/dissertations/final projects to college deans
- April 9 Last day to complete requirements & pay minimum registration fee
- April 14 Last day of classes
- April 15 Last day for departments to enter admit decisions on GS02 for summer
- April 22 Last day for Graduate Studies final approval
- April 22 University Graduation
- April 23 College Convocations
- April 27 First day of spring classes

2021 GRADUATION APPLICATION DEADLINES

January 29
Last day a graduate student can apply for graduation

February 12
Last day departments can approve graduation

If a student is planning on graduating in April, they must be registered for at least two credit hours winter 2021 semester.

Please pass along this information to your students. Students have been sent a message regarding the registration requirement, but it is always helpful to receive a friendly reminder from their graduate program managers as well.





BYU Graduate
Studies

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Feedback for Graduate Studies

Please feel free to email any questions, concerns, updates, or suggestions to MariLee Allred, Assistant to the Dean, at marilee.allred@byu.edu.

